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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS

VOL. 36

DECEMBER 2, 1921

No. 48

COURSES ON THE CARE OF TUBERCULOUS PATIENTS.

SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION IN THE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS, CONDUCTED BY THE UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE IN PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE DISTRICT NO. 8.¹

By WM. C. WITTE and W. H. WATTERSON, Surgeons (R), United States Public Health Service.

At the request of the Surgeon General, in the spring of 1920, the medical officers of Public Health Service District No. 8 outlined a plan for giving instruction in the diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis to the field medical officers of the Service in Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan. The plan recommended that schools be conducted at Springfield, Ill., at the Muirdale Sanatorium, Wauwatosa, Wis., and at the Michigan State Sanatorium, Howell, Mich.

Courses of instruction were arranged and the students were chosen from among the acting assistant surgeons, assistant internes, and specialists in the service of the United States Public Health Service. The selected students were directed to one of the three schools. Up to November 1, 1920, seven such courses had been conducted—three at Springfield, Ill.; two at Muirdale Sanatorium, and two at the Michigan State Sanatorium. About that time the broad benefits of the courses were very apparent, and an officer was detailed in charge of all the tuberculosis schools of the district. Two more courses were conducted at Springfield. It was then thought advisable to concentrate the efforts and combine the staff of the three original schools into one school, and conduct it in Chicago, a central place of meeting, where the district office of the bureau is located. Four very intensive, seven-day courses were conducted in Chicago, with an average of 20 to each class.

The course embraced instruction in topography, inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation—closely adhering to the outline as scheduled by the Medical Department of the Army, under the direction of Col. George E. Bushnell, M. C. (retired)—demonstrations of the normal chest, chest pathology, and finally a study

¹ To improve the character of examinations and treatment of tuberculous veterans, the Surgeon General early initiated the organization of a large number of schools for a standard short course of training which have been operated in Public Health Service hospitals and various other points in the field throughout the United States. The courses here described are those conducted in accordance with the general plan.

of advanced cases in hospitals. The classes were divided into small sections for individual instruction under specialists, who guided each member of the class so that he thoroughly understood the steps of diagnosis, and was constantly taught to visualize the conditions accountable for the physical findings. Each class member's stethoscope was carefully examined, his ears were tested, and his ability to interpret findings was determined.

Following these lectures and demonstrations, a review with quizzes was conducted, thoroughly fixing each point in the minds of the members of the class; then, special instruction was given in differential diagnosis, and clinics were arranged from the unlimited material furnished by the out-patient department. Demonstrations in differential diagnosis were given the class and to each individual. No member of the class was allowed to miss these special instructions, nor to leave the class without having been able to individually differentiate different breath sounds, voice conductivity, and the different kinds of râles, or without a mechanical and clinical knowledge pertaining to same. Special instruction was given in history taking and clinical study of the cases.

The close relation of the circulatory system to pulmonary conditions induced us to add a lecture and clinic on the heart. Late in the course, each member of the class was given two or three claimants to examine and instructed to write up complete reports of the examinations on Form 1934-B, United States Public Health Service. A graph of the chest was added, on which the findings were charted and represented graphically by simple, though uniform, symbols.

Reports of these examinations were turned in and graded as to their value in conveying to the Rating Board a word picture of the conditions of the claimant, with reference to his compensation rating, necessity for treatment, and feasibility for training. These grades, with the grades from the quizzes, attendance, cooperation, hearing and interpretation, made up the individual grades, which were sent to the Surgeon General's office, or, more recently, to the Medical Division of the United States Veterans' Bureau.

Certain required reading was expected, and the quizzes partly covered it. A short course in X-ray and laboratory work was given, suggesting the possibilities of assistance in diagnosis from these sources, no attempt being made to give exhaustive instruction in these subjects.

Treatment was discussed from every angle, giving weight to the fact that we are dealing with the individual as well as with his lungs, with a biological and not a mathematical problem, and emphasizing that treatment has not the exactness of mathematics, that the infection of one means sickness, invalidism, or perhaps death, while

to another it is an opportunity which, properly guided, establishes a lifelong immunity. Treatment followed by improvement should lead to rehabilitation, establishment of self-reliance, clear aim, and independence. With no individual is it more true than with the tuberculous that "Life is a school where one must train one's self to what is best."

Cinema films (Army films prepared by Dr. Harry Stoll, of Hartford, Conn.) on the diagnosis of tuberculosis were run twice during the course and were very instructive. They further served as a general review. The course was closed by a lecture from a field officer on the subjects, "Loyalty, Hospitalization, Out-patient Treatment, and Specialist's Examinations."

Thus far 102 commissioned officers, acting assistant surgeons, specialists, and internes have taken the course—39 being from Illinois, 34 from Michigan, and 29 from Wisconsin; 29 designated examiners—15 from Illinois, 9 from Michigan, and 5 from Wisconsin; and about 20 physicians not in Government service, making a total of 150 physicians in this district who have thus far availed themselves of the course. About 25 commissioned officers, specialists, and internes, and 140 designated examiners in this district have not yet taken the course.

The next course is arranged for the week December 5–11, inclusive. The instructors and the general program will be the same as in the last course. The members of the class have shown great enthusiasm concerning the course, and the Rating, Relief, and Rehabilitation Sections have noted marked improvement in reports of examination and the general efficiency of the men who have taken the courses. Of these, about 80 are considered able to make reports pertaining to the special examination of the chest sufficiently intelligible to be satisfactory to the Rating Board. This alone has lessened the expense of travel and the inconvenience to the disabled ex-service men in going long distances to chest specialists, and so has more than justified the expense of the course. When the United States Veterans' Bureau took over the work of the three branches of the Government to form the one bureau, it approved the continuance of these tuberculosis schools and now has general supervision of them.

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the following for their enthusiasm and untiring efforts in making the courses a success:

At the Mairdale Sanatorium: Dr. G. L. Bellis and his staff.

At the Michigan State Sanatorium: Dr. E. R. Van der Slice; Dr. E. V. Pierce, Superintendent; Dr. W. R. Vis, Grand Rapids; Dr. H. M. Rich, Detroit; Dr. B. A. Shepard, Kalamazoo; and Dr. J. S. Pritchard, of Battle Creek Sanatorium, Battle Creek, Mich.

For the course at Springfield, Ill.: Dr. George Thomas Palmer and Dr. Herman H. Cole, both of Springfield; Dr. Roswell T. Pettit, Ottawa; Dr. Russell E. Adkins, of the State Tuberculosis Association; Dr. O. W. McMichael, Chicago; and Dr. J. S. Pritchard, of Battle Creek, Mich. Also the Laboratories of the State Department of Health, under the direction of Thomas G. Hull, and the X-ray Laboratory at the Springfield Hospital, under the direction of Dr. Fred S. O'Hara.

For the course in Chicago: All medical officers assigned to district headquarters, and Drs. J. S. Pritchard, O. W. McMichael, Roswell T. Pettit, Herman H. Cole, and two physicians not connected with Government service, whose services were volunteered—Dr. Everett Morris, of Chicago, and Dr. M. A. Mortensen, of the Battle Creek Sanatorium.

We wish to also acknowledge at this time the work and cooperation of the National Pathological Laboratories, under the direction of Drs. Edward Blaine, A. M. Moody, and James A. Moore, and of the staff of the United States Public Health Service Hospital No. 30, United States Public Health Service Hospital No. 76, the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanatorium, and the Jackson Park Hospital, Chicago.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION AND THE TUBERCULOUS EX-SERVICE PATIENT.¹

By CHAS. M. MONTGOMERY, Surgeon (R), United States Public Health Service.

In March of 1919 that small but historic arm of our Government, the United States Public Health Service, had, without previous warning, one of the greatest medical and hygienic problems of history suddenly placed upon it. A single part of this problem was concerned with tuberculosis, the primary need being to hospitalize and care for ex-service men and women affected with this disease.

Like other human instruments in this respect, the Public Health Service and the United States Government, in spite of the tremendous efforts put forth to meet this stupendous tuberculosis problem, have not attained all they could wish; but they have accomplished far more than is generally appreciated. It is unfortunate that with the criticism directed against those directly engaged in solving the many and difficult problems of the ex-service men and women, so little has been heard from that large number who have received adequate medical attention and have appreciated it, and who have faithfully cooperated, through months and years, with their doctors and have gained the results desired.

¹ Read before the North Carolina Tuberculosis Association, Greensboro, N. C., Oct. 7, 1921.